

Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs honored with prestigious History in Progress Award

(DOVER, Del.—Oct. 15, 2014)—The [American Association for State and Local History](#) has presented a prestigious History in Progress Award to the Delaware Historical Society and the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs for their collaborative exhibit “Forging Faith, Building Freedom: African American Faith Experiences in Delaware, 1800-1980.” The award, a component of the association’s [Leadership in History Awards](#) program, is presented for projects that are highly inspirational; exhibit exceptional scholarship; and/or are exceedingly entrepreneurial in terms of funding, partnerships or collaborations, creative problem-solving or unusual project design, and inclusiveness. Only four projects in the entire nation were honored with the award in 2014.



Presentation of the History in Progress Award for the exhibit "Forging Faith, Building Freedom: African American Faith Experiences in Delaware, 1800-1980." From left are Bob Beatty, interim president and chief executive officer of the American Association for State and Local History; Constance J. Cooper, chief curator of the Delaware Historical Society; Marian Carpenter, Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs curator of collections management; and Lynne Ireland, deputy director of the Nebraska State Historical Society and immediate-past chairperson of the American Association for State and Local History.

"Forging Faith, Building Freedom: African American Faith Experiences in Delaware, 1800-1980" explored the faith experiences of Delaware's black community and its contributions to the development of religion in the United States including a commemoration of the bicentennial of the African Union Methodist tradition and the August Quarterly, the nation's oldest African-American religious festival.



Section of the exhibit "Forging Faith, Building Freedom: African American Faith Experiences in Delaware, 1800-1980."

On-display from Sept. 27, 2013 to June 14, 2014 at the Delaware History Museum, a unit of the [Delaware Historical Society](#) located at 504 N. Market St. in Wilmington, Del., the exhibit was created through a partnership between the society's curatorial staff, which researched and wrote the exhibit narrative and organized loans of exhibited objects; and the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs' [Collections, Affiliates, Research and Exhibits \(CARE\) Team](#) which designed, fabricated and installed the exhibit. Go to the following to view the exhibit [online](#).



History in

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The American Association for State and Local History initiated the Leadership in History Awards program in 1945 to establish and encourage standards of excellence in the collection, preservation and interpretation of state and local history throughout America. In 2014, the association conferred 77 national awards honoring people, projects, exhibits, books and organizations.

In addition to the History in Progress award, the “Forging Faith” exhibit was honored with an Award of Merit which recognizes excellence in history programs, projects and people when compared with similar activities nationwide. The Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs was also the recipient of an Award of Merit for the “[The DeBraak and Its Atlantic World](#),” a multi-dimensional interpretive program on the British warship that sank off the coast of Delaware in the late 18th century.



Visitors enjoying a tour of the
DeBraak hull as part of program

“The DeBraak and Its Atlantic World.”

In addition to its three Leadership in History awards, the division was also recognized as a graduate of the association’s [StEPs](#) program (Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations) which helps small- and mid-sized history museums assess policies and practices, manage daily operations and plan for the future. All of the honors noted above were conferred during the American Association for State and Local History’s [awards banquet](#) which took place in St. Paul, Minn. on Sept. 19, 2014. Constance J. Cooper, chief curator of the Delaware Historical Society, and Marian Carpenter, the division’s curator of collections management, accepted honors on behalf of their respective organizations.

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